

Congress it also prevents any meaningful ability for the vast majority of Congress to inform themselves of how an agency works.

Several months ago, I had to take similar action when I supported Senator CHAMBLISS' hold of James Cole's nomination to be Deputy Attorney General in order to get documents from the Department of Justice. In the end, the documents we uncovered shed light on the Department's actions regarding Operation Fast and Furious and the murder of Agent Brian Terry.

I strongly believe that it is critical for Congress to have access to documents in order to conduct vigorous and independent oversight. It is unfortunate that this administration, which has pledged to be the most transparent in history, disagrees. As long as they continue to do so, I will be forced to take steps like this in order to ensure that Congress receives a complete picture of this administration's actions.

TRIBUTE TO KRISTEN KELLIHER

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I am taking this opportunity to share with the Senate the extraordinary accomplishment of a young Vermonter. At the age of 17 years, 4 months, and 13 days, Kristen Kelliher became the youngest female to climb the highest peaks in all 48 States in the continental United States. Her journey began in 2002 as she and her family started climbing during family vacations. Soon she progressed to scaling the tops of America's most challenging peaks, including Mount Hood and Mount Rainier. Along the way, she endured injuries and logistical setbacks, but she never let those stop her from reaching her goal. She saved the best for last. Surrounded by 30 family members on a sunny September day, she summited Vermont's Mount Mansfield, in Stowe. She is a dynamic role model to all Vermonters, young and old.

Along with excelling on the hiking trails, Kristen is also an honor student and a three-sport athlete. She plans to graduate early and climb the last two peaks—Hawaii's Mauna Kea, and Alaska's Mount McKinley—next year. Kristen is modest when praised about her achievement and says she only hopes to inspire others to reach goals they once thought unattainable. Vermonters are proud to recognize Kristen Kelliher's strength, skill and stamina, and we congratulate her on this great accomplishment. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article about her achievement, from *The Boston Globe*.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the *Boston Globe*, Oct. 14, 2011]

CLIMBING INTO THE RECORD BOOK

(By Joseph P. Kahn)

NORWICH, VT.—On a warm, sunny afternoon last month, Kristen Kelliher hiked to the top of Mount Mansfield, the highest

point in her home state of Vermont. Accompanied by 30 family members and friends, she was greeted at the summit by a banner celebrating her achievement, one that landed Kelliher in the record books.

That day, at age 17 years, 4 months, and 13 days, she became the youngest female to “highpoint”—stand atop the highest peak—in all 48 states in the continental United States.

Climbing Mount Mansfield, all 4,393 feet of it, was a piece of cake, though, compared with what Kelliher accomplished this year. Beginning in June, she conquered three peaks that rank among America's most challenging: Oregon's Mount Hood, Montana's Granite Peak, and Washington's Mount Rainier, whose imposing height (14,410 feet) and treacherous weather conditions make any ascent risky.

The previous female record holder, Danielle Birrer, was 18 years, 4 days old when she set the record in 2000. In all, only 404 climbers of any age or gender have achieved the 48-state feat, according to the Highpointers Club, a Colorado organization that compiles such statistics.

In the meantime, Kelliher has set her sights on Hawaii and Alaska—and an even more exclusive club, the 50-staters. Of its 214 members, fewer than 15 are female.

“I’ve wanted to do this since I was 9,” Kelliher said in an interview at the high school she attends across the Vermont border in Hanover, N.H., where she is in her senior year. A three-sport athlete and honors student, Kelliher was preparing to play in a varsity field hockey game.

Inspired by an article about a record-setting 12-year-old male highpointer, Kelliher, who has been hiking and skiing all her life, decided to try for the girls’ record at an age when many girls might consider hiking more of a chore than a challenge.

“I’m kind of competitive. OK, a lot,” Kelliher said, breaking into smile. “It sounded like a cool goal. I thought, I could do that, too.”

Her climb into the record books has not been uneventful, uninterrupted, inexpensive, or worry-free, however, particularly on her family’s part.

Conquering Rainier in July took three attempts, each with its own challenges. Her first expedition—accompanied by her stepfather, Bill Bender, a solar-energy company owner, and led by a professional guide team—ended in disappointment. After returning to base camp, Kelliher learned that while her group had technically “summitted,” they had stopped short of reaching Rainier’s actual highpoint, because of bad weather. The mountain’s true highpoint, known as Columbia Crest, was a 40-minute round trip from where her party turned around, even though the group received papers certifying that they had summited.

It took two more attempts, each costing several hundred dollars in guide fees and equipment rentals, for Kelliher to cross Washington off her list: number 46, and counting.

“I was so upset,” she recalled of the stomach-sinking moment when she found she had fallen short. “If I am going for a record, I have to get to the top. Technically, nobody would have known. But morally it wasn’t quite right.”

Her stepfather says it’s in her nature to persevere where others might not.

“Mentally as well as physically, Kristen’s very tough,” he said. Climbing Mount Hood, Kelliher incurred painfully swollen shins that stayed unhealed through her first Rainier climb. “You never heard her complain, though,” Bender said. Instead, Kelliher grew even more determined after other

climbers seemed doubtful she could make it up Rainier, period, potentially forcing them to turn back, too.

What has recently become a celebration of one teen’s extraordinary feat is also a family saga, one that has taken Kelliher, her parents, and three siblings to remote corners of America that few seek out, much less scale with backpacks and ice axes.

Their first conquest happened almost by accident, on a 2002 cross-country road trip, when the family hiked up South Dakota’s Harney Peak. Highpointing wasn’t even in their vocabulary yet.

In 2004, urged on by Kelliher, they began targeting other states more systematically. First came New England (all except Vermont, which she saved for last), then six mid-Atlantic states. An 18-state odyssey in 2005 took them through the Deep South, Midwest, and Southwest. In 2006, they knocked off 11 more states. In most cases, the family—including Kelliher’s older brother, Ryan, now 19, and two half-brothers, Billy, 10, and Danny, 7—drove from state to state, camping along the way and hiking together up all but the steepest peaks.

“This trip has taken places we just wouldn’t have gone to otherwise,” said her mother, Mary Bender, a pediatrician. Asked whether her daughter’s quest to set a record had been their driving force, she nodded and laughed. “Although I will say that if Kristen had set out to see every shopping mall in America, that wouldn’t have worked for us.”

Only once, in June 2006, did the family highpoint twice (Illinois and Indiana) in a single day. States like Florida, whose 345-foot highpoint, Britton Hill, is America’s lowest, were no challenge at all. Five, including Rhode Island, never rise above 900 feet.

On the other extreme are 11 state highpoints soaring 11,000 feet and higher, many of which are difficult to access. Wyoming’s Gannett Peak, for instance, which Kelliher and Bender climbed in August 2010, is reachable only by a 46-mile round trip hike. Lugging backpacks crammed with climbing equipment and camping gear, the two spent six long days getting to the top and back.

Highpoints, said Bill Bender, “are all kind of weird in their own way. You have to be a little eccentric to do this.” He has never calculated the overall cost of their highpointing excursions, which until recently have been budgeted as ordinary family vacations. However, flying to the last few Western states and paying for guides and equipment have nudged their spending into “the many thousands. I’m not sure we want to know the total. Except for the last handful, though, it’s been fairly inexpensive.”

Tim Webb, president of the 3,000-member Highpointers Club, says his organization attracts a diverse mix of hikers, wilderness backpackers, and serious mountaineers, each with different objectives.

“We get a broad spectrum, including lots of families who plan vacations around highpointing,” Webb notes. Accumulating even 40 states, for which his club awards a special pin, is “a pretty significant accomplishment,” he adds.

Early on, the Benders were unsure Kelliher would remain interested in pursuing all 48. By 2007, Kelliher having completed 10 trips and 42 highpoints, only two Eastern states, New York and Vermont, were left. Then came a two-year hiatus.

“Kristen was still growing, and she needed to grow into the bigger mountains,” her stepfather recalled.

She began last year taller, stronger, and more resolute than ever. “If I wanted to do this [set the record],” Kelliher said, “I knew I’d have to start moving.”

Now it's on to 50, and another possible age record. Next February, after completing high school a semester early, Kelliher will tackle Hawaii's 13,796-foot Mauna Kea, a relatively easy climb. Last is Alaska's 20,320-foot Mount McKinley (also known as Denali), the most challenging of all. For every 1,000 climbers who go up, three fail to make it down alive.

Kelliher has signed with a guide team for next May and will pay for the trip's \$17,000 cost herself. Already filling out college applications, she's looking for corporate sponsorship or grant money to help.

"It's definitely scary," her mother said. "If Kristen can figure out how to fund it, in her 17-year-old way, I won't stop her, though. And if she can't, well, then I don't have to worry about her being killed in an avalanche."

Kelliher says she will not be discouraged if her group fails to conquer Denali.

Yet if she succeeds, it just might inspire another fourth-grader to work harder—and climb higher—to achieve goals she once thought were unreachable.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO STEVEN C. BORELL

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, today I bid farewell to Steven C. Borell, the executive director of the Alaska Miners Association, who has decided to retire after 22 years at the helm of Alaska's foremost mining advocacy agency.

While I am sure the State's mining industry will be in great hands when Mr. Fred Parady takes over as the new executive director in January, still it is very hard for me to imagine a minerals industry in the State of Alaska without Steve championing not only its regulatory survival but its future growth.

For far longer than I have been in public service, Steve has been the steady, knowledgeable voice on all issues surrounding mineral development in Alaska. His depth of knowledge of land laws and regulatory/permitting issues is legendary. He has had the trust of regulators and politicians and has done a sensational job of representing the interests of the minerals industry, fighting for reasonable terms and commonsense regulation of the industry—an increasingly difficult task given recent regulatory proposals out of Washington.

Alaskans are extremely lucky that Steve, an industrial engineer by training, came to Alaska in spring 1988 to run Valdez Creek mineral operations at Cantwell and then stayed on to cheerlead the rebirth of the State's minerals industry. Steve, who graduated from Kansas State University in 1968, had previously worked first as a foreman at a mine in Velva, ND, advancing to be the mine's superintendent in 1976. He later worked at mines in Colorado and in Colombia in South America before working at the Consolidated Coal Company and for the Arch Mineral Corporation in Illinois before coming to Alaska. While in Alaska, he also served as a consulting engineer on several mineral projects.

In 1989, the State, after the death of efforts to open the U.S. Borax molybdenum claims at Misty Fjords outside of Ketchikan, had only two major operating hard-rock mines, the Red Dog and Greens Creek Mines, and the Usibelli coal mine that together produced \$277 million in minerals. Since Steve assumed the helm of the industry's main advocacy arm, Fort Knox, Pogo, and the Kensington mines have all come on line, exploration spending has quadrupled, and the value of the minerals industry has risen more than tenfold, topping \$3 billion, and many more projects are on the way. While higher ore prices certainly have helped, Steve's hardwork, perseverance, and dedication to helping the industry overcome regulatory barriers is a key reason for the increase.

I know how hard he has worked to keep track of and to help bring some common sense to the mind-boggling permitting and regulatory processes that have dogged the minerals industry in recent years. His determination and attention to detail have helped numerous Alaska projects advance. He has always been a strong advocate for Alaska's hundreds of small-scale placer and recreational miners and for large-scale mineral developers. He has helped both equally, giving freely of his time and talent to promote Alaskan development for the good of the State and all its citizens.

I could sing his praises on this floor for hours. My staff and I will miss him greatly, and I am sure all of the industry will too. But promoting mineral development, fighting the forces that want to overregulate and lock up Alaska lands, has become not just a full-time job, but now requires an all-consuming passion given the administration's wild land edicts, more than 2,000 Federal regulatory proposals, and an endless stream of environmental suits and attacks. No one has earned a rest more than Steven C. Borell.

I can only wish him well in the future and again thank him for all that he has done for Alaska and our citizens. The State is a far better place for all of his many efforts. We all owe him our true thanks and gratitude for a job very well done, and we will all miss his sage advice and wisdom.●

RECOGNIZING THE COLORADO NONPROFIT ASSOCIATION

• Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, today I honor the Colorado Nonprofit Association as it celebrates 25 years of supporting Colorado's nonprofit organizations and strengthening our communities.

Colorado has a strong and diverse nonprofit sector with almost 19,000 public charities. These nonprofits perform many services that strengthen Colorado's communities and enrich the lives of our residents. It is also important to note that even in our current troubled economy, these organizations are an engine of growth, generating al-

most \$17 billion in revenue in 2009 and sustaining thousands of jobs throughout the State.

Colorado Nonprofit Association is a statewide organization with almost 1,400 nonprofit members whose mission is to lead, assist, and strengthen nonprofits. Founded in 1986 as the Colorado Association of Nonprofit Organizations, its original charge was to create and support programs designed to increase the effectiveness of nonprofits around the State. The Association has since expanded its scope as the nonprofit sector has grown.

The association has developed key resources for nonprofit organizations and the public. "The Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Colorado," first published in 2007, contains State and Federal legal requirements, management best practices, and transparency and accountability standards. Supported by Colorado's secretary of state and attorney general, the association has distributed more than 30,000 copies of this resource and conducted numerous training sessions around the State. The association's Colorado Generosity Project seeks to increase charitable giving in Colorado by increasing awareness of the nonprofit sector. It has also published several research reports about nonprofit economic activity and the beliefs and behaviors of Colorado's donors. Each of these initiatives has contributed to a greater culture of giving in the State while strengthening local economies and improving the well-being of every Coloradan.

The association further encourages civic engagement by nonprofit organizations. With wide community networks, nonprofits are well situated to solve community and social problems and to engage policymakers in this effort. The Colorado Nonprofit Association provides resources and information to nonprofits to support their advocacy and develop productive working relationships with elected officials. I appreciate the association's continued partnerships, which make our State a better place to live.

In the Nation's current economic climate, the demand for services and programs offered by nonprofit organizations is greater than ever. The Colorado Nonprofit Association provides the right leadership to assist our nonprofits in these challenging times. I recognize this organization for its contributions over the years and look forward to its continued success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:31 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1070. An act to amend the Securities Act of 1933 to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to exempt a certain class of securities from such Act.